

**REMARKS**

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

By way of the foregoing amendments, Claim 2 has been amended to refer to the holding means that holds the second door closed relative to the vehicle. This claim wording is supported by the description at the bottom of page five and the top portion of page six of the present application. Also, Claim 4 has been canceled and the wording in Claim 3, which is now set forth in Claim 1, has been clarified in minor respects without the narrowing the claim scope to recite that the first and second doors are provided in line with one another on one side of the vehicle.

It is thus respectfully submitted that the issues raised on page three of the Official Action have been addressed and overcome. Accordingly, withdrawal of the claim rejection based on the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 is respectfully requested.

The amendment to Claim 2 changing the recitation of the "supporting means" to --holding means-- addresses the drawing objections set forth on page two of the Official Action. The drawing figures in this application illustrate the holding means described at the bottom of page five of the present application. Accordingly, withdrawal of the drawing objection is respectfully requested.

The subject matter of this application pertains to a vehicle door operation system that operates first and second doors of a vehicle. The vehicle door operation system comprises sending means for sending a request signal, a portable station for sending an ID information in response to the request signal from the sending means, receiving means for receiving the ID information sent from the portable station,

judging means which judges whether or not the ID information sent from the portable station is correct, object detecting means for detecting an object, and an opening operation means for opening the second door. In addition, a control means switches the first door and the second door from a locked condition to an unlocked condition when the ID information is verified as correct information by the judging means, and either an object detecting signal from the object detecting means or an opening operation signal from the opening operation means is input to the control means.

The Official Action sets forth a rejection of independent Claim 1, and various dependent claims, based on the disclosure in U.S. Patent No. 6,075,294 to *Van den Boom et al.* This document discloses a locking system for a vehicle that includes vehicle doors adapted to be switched to an unlocked condition from a locked condition when a user's hand approaches the handle of one of the doors. The doors each include a lock 14 as shown in Fig. 1 of the patent. This switching of the door from the locked condition to the unlocked condition is carried out by an ECU 16. The ECU 16 sends a signal by way of conductors 17 to the respective locks 14 associated with the doors on the sides of the vehicle as well as the door on the rear of the vehicle. It is to be noted in this regard that *Van den Boom et al.* indicates that the locks associated with the rear door and the doors on opposite sides of the vehicle are switched from the locked condition to the unlocked condition when the user's hand approaches one of the door handles.

One of the differences between the vehicle door operation system at issue here and the disclosure in *Van den Boom et al.* is that in the vehicle door operation system described in the present application (see, for example, the discussion on page 16 of the application), the control means switches the first and second doors

located on one side of the vehicle from a locked condition to an unlocked condition without switching the door/doors on the other side of the vehicle from the locked condition to the unlocked condition. That is, when the ID information is verified as correct information by the judging means, and either an object detecting signal from the object detecting means or an opening operation signal from the opening operation means is input to the control means, the control means switches the first and second doors on the one side of the vehicle from the locked condition to the unlocked condition, but does not switch the door on the other side of the vehicle from the locked condition to the unlocked condition. One advantage associated with this operation is that as a user approaches the vehicle so that the first and second doors on the one side of the vehicle are switched to the unlocked condition, an individual seeking to engage in unlawful or other harmful activity cannot gain entry from the door/doors on the opposite side of the vehicle because the control means does not open the door/doors on that opposite side of the vehicle.

This clarification has been incorporated into independent Claim 1 to more clearly distinguish over the disclosure in *Van den Boom et al.* Accordingly, withdrawal of the anticipatory rejection of independent Claim 1 is respectfully requested.

The Official Action also cites the disclosure in U.S. Patent No. 6,552,69 to *Okada et al.* This document is said to disclose a second controller that controls the operation of a latching mechanism. However, the disclosure in this document does not make up for the deficiencies pointed out above with respect to the disclosure in *Van den Boom et al.* Accordingly, a combination of the disclosures in *Van den Boom*

*et al.* and *Okada et al.* would not have led one to do configure a vehicle door operation system having the features recited in independent Claim 1.

Withdrawal of the objections and rejections of record, and allowance of this application are earnestly solicited.

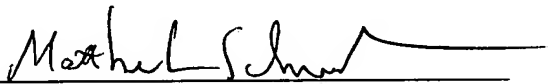
Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

BUCHANAN INGERSOLL & ROONEY PC

Date: July 11, 2006

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